

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Research Administration
Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine

INFORMATION ABOUT BEE CULTURE

Most persons appreciate that the only source of honey and beeswax is the honey bee. Few realize, however, that, although this insect in the United States produces in excess of 200 million pounds of honey and 4 million pounds of beeswax annually, these are merely by-products, and that its principal role is in the pollination of some 50 agricultural crops for the production of seed and fruit. While many other insects are of value as pollinators, their numbers have been so depleted in the course of agricultural development that they can no longer be relied upon. In practically all agricultural areas honey bees are now the most numerous flower-visiting insects. The transfer of pollen from flower to flower is so essential that beekeeping must be carried on to maintain a profitable agriculture.

Although keeping bees on a commercial scale requires that they be located in areas with an abundant acreage of honey plants, a person can keep a few colonies as a hobby, or to furnish honey for his table, or to increase the supply of pollinating insects in practically all cultivated areas of the country. Because bees can be kept so universally, many persons own bees, but not enough keep bees efficiently or make beekeeping a specialty. Efficiency in beekeeping is based upon a thorough knowledge of the life and behavior of bees, the proper use of equipment, and careful attention to marketing problems.

This circular lists publications on bee culture issued by the Department of Agriculture and its State cooperators, and also books and journals. It lists bee supply houses and beekeeping organizations. The beekeeping activities of the Department of Agriculture are outlined and a few paragraphs giving advice to beginners are included. If your beekeeping questions are not answered in this and other Department publications, the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine will be glad to render further assistance. Address all inquiries to Division of Bee Culture and Biological Control, Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, Md.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PUBLICATIONS

Some of the following publications are available for free distribution. All are obtainable by purchase from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., or can be consulted in libraries. Do not send money or any other kind of remittance for publications to the Division of Bee Culture and Biological Control.

Farmers' Bulletins:

	Cents
961, Transferring Bees to Modern Hives.....	5
1713, Treatment of American Foulbrood.....	5

Circulars:

386, The Wax Moth and Its Control.....	5
392, Diagnosing Bee Diseases in the Apiary.....	5
554, Honey and Pollen Plants in the United States.....	10
650, Factors Affecting Usefulness of Honey Bees in Pollination.....	10
702, Productive Management of Honey Bee Colonies in the Northern States.....	10
876, Use of Honey Bees in Alfalfa Seed Production.....	5

Technical Bulletins:

656, Cost of Producing Extracted Honey in California.....	10
716, Investigations of the Physical and Chemical Properties of Beeswax.....	5

The following publications of the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine are obtainable without cost from that Bureau, Washington 25, D. C., or from the Division of Bee Culture and Biological Control:

- E-297, List of Dealers in Beekeeping Supplies, Package Bees,
and Queens.
- E-531, The Use of Pollen Traps and Pollen Supplements in
Developing Honey Bee Colonies.
- E-536, The Role of Pollen in the Economy of the Hive.
- E-693, Two-Queen Colony Management.
- E-749, Bee-Gathered Pollen in Various Localities of the
Pacific Coast.
- E-763, Tests with DDT on Honey Bees in Small Cages.
- ET-250, A Manual for the Artificial Insemination of Queen Bees.
- ET-291, Thresher and Separator for Red Clover Seed Samples.

FEDERAL-STATE COOPERATIVE PUBLICATIONS

The following State publications, reporting investigations in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, can be obtained from the indicated State Agricultural Experiment Station or consulted in libraries:

Nectar and Pollen Plants of Oregon, by H. A. Scullen and George H. Vansell. Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 412, 1942.

The Beginner Beekeeper in Louisiana, by E. Oertel. Louisiana State Department of Agriculture and Immigration. Ed. 2, 1947.

Pollen and Nectar Plants of Utah, by George H. Vansell. Utah Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular 124. 1949.

Growing Alfalfa for Seed in Utah (Contains section on pollinating insects by G. E. Bohart, G. F. Knowlton, W. P. Nye, and F. E. Todd). Utah Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular 125. 1950.

Feeding Pollen Supplement and Pollen Substitutes to Honey Bees, by V. Levin, W. Nye, G. Knowlton. Utah Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 237. 1951.

Honey Bees for Higher Yields of Alfalfa Seed in Utah, by G. Bohart, G. Knowlton. Utah Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular 154. 1951.

Other information available from various agencies in the Department of Agriculture is indicated below:

Semi-monthly Honey Report. This report, issued on the 1st and 15th of each month, gives quotations on honey and beeswax, the condition of bees and honey plants, data on imports and exports of honey, and other pertinent information relating to the marketing of honey and beeswax. Copies are available without cost through the Production and Marketing Administration, Washington 25, D. C.

Production Statistics. Honey and Beeswax Production. This is an annual report usually issued in January. Gives statistics on the number of colonies, and production of honey and beeswax. Available without cost from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington 25, D. C. An annual report on the number of queen bees and pounds of package bees shipped is available from the same source.

United States Standards for Grades of Extracted Honey Effective April 15, 1951. Send request to Processed Products Standardization and Inspection Division, Fruit and Vegetable Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, Washington 25, D. C.

Honey Diversion Program. Payments of $4\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound are made on honey sold by packers or dealers to manufacturers for use in approved new outlets. Further information available from the Fruit and Vegetable Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, Washington 25, D. C.

Honey Export Subsidy Program. Payments of $4\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound or up to 50 percent of the f.a.s. price, whichever is lower, are made to exporters of honeys meeting set specifications. Information available from Fruit and Vegetable Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, Washington 25, D. C.

Honey Price Support Program. The Agricultural Act of 1949 makes honey price support for beekeepers mandatory at levels ranging from 60 to 90 percent of parity. The 1952 program provides for the support of most flavors of honey meeting U. S. Grade C specifications at an average of 11.4 cents per pound delivered in 60 pound or

larger containers, through approved farm-storage or warehouse-storage loans or purchase agreements. Honey on which loans are not repaid will be taken over by CCC. Most of the honey acquired by the Department is utilized in school lunch and institutional feeding outlets. Inquiries on this subject should be addressed to Fruit and Vegetable Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, Washington 25, D. C.

Permanent Glass Color Standards for Extracted Honey, Circular 307, Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry. Obtainable from Eastern Regional Research Laboratory, Philadelphia 18, Penna.

Honey-Marketing Cooperatives. Information obtainable from Farm Credit Administration, Washington 25, D. C.

Motion Picture Film. "The Realm of the Honey Bee". This is a silent four-reel film showing the life history and behavior of the honey bee. It is replete with close-ups of bees gathering nectar and pollen, performing the "food dance", and driving out drones and robber bees. It shows how bees sting, and also records a fatal encounter between rival queens. The film closes showing how honey is removed from the hives and prepared for market, and a few of the ways in which honey can be used. Copies of this film in 35-millimeter width may be purchased through the Motion Picture Service, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. Copies of 16-millimeter width may be purchased direct from United World Film, Inc., 1445 Park Ave., New York 29, N. Y.

BEE SUPPLY HOUSES

C. W. Aeppler Co.....	Oconomowoc, Wis.
Dadant and Sons.....	Hamilton, Ill.
Diamond Match Co.....	Chico, Calif.
Walter T. Kelley Co.....	Clarkson, Ky.
Leahy Manufacturing Co.....	Higginsville, Mo.
G. B. Lewis Co.....	Watertown, Wis.
August Lotz Co.....	Boyd, Wis.
Marshfield Mfg. Co., Inc.....	Marshfield, Wis.
Fred W. Muth Co.....	Cincinnati, Ohio
A. I. Root Co.....	Medina, Ohio
Williams Brothers Mfg. Co.....	Portland, Oreg.
A. G. Woodman Co.....	Grand Rapids, Mich.
Superior Honey Co.....	Ogden, Utah, and Los Angeles, Calif.
The Hubbard Apiaries.....	Onsted, Mich.

See also: List of Dealers in Beekeeping Supplies,
Package Bees, and Queens. U. S. Bur. Ent.
and Plant Quar. E-297

BOOKS ON BEEKEEPING

Books for sale by bee supply houses (see page 4) and book dealers.
Prices are approximate. Some of these books may be in your public library.

AEC and XYZ of Bee Culture (1950).....	A. I. and E. P. Foot.....	\$3.95
Allen Latham's Bee Book (1949).....	Allen Latham.....	2.95
American Honey Plants (1947).....	Frank C. Pellett.....	6.00
Anatomy and Physiology of the Honey Bee (1925)R. E. Snodgrass....		3.50
Backlot Beekeeping (1949).....	C. H. Pease.....	2.00
Bee Hunting (1908).....	John R. Lockard.....	.50
Beekeeping (1928).....	E. F. Phillips.....	4.00
Beekeeping for Beginners (1949).....	G. H. Cale, Jr.....	1.00
Beekeeping as a Hobby (1941).....	Kyle Onstott.....	2.00
Bee Venom Therapy (1935).....	Podog F. Beck (M.D.)....	5.00
Bees, Vision, Chemical Senses, Language (1950)K. von Frisch....		3.00
Beeswax (1951).....	H. H. Root.....	4.75
Better Queens (1949).....	Jay Smith.....	4.00
City of the Bees (1949).....	Frank S. Stuart.....	3.00
Dadant System of Beekeeping (1932).....	C. P. Dadant.....	1.00
First Lessons in Beekeeping (1951)Rev....	C. P. Dadant.....	1.00
Five Hundred Answers to Bee Questions(1942)....	G. S. DeMuth.....	.50
Following the Bee Line (1931).....	Josephine Morse.....	1.00
Golden Throng (1940).....	Edwin Way Teale.....	5.00
History of American Beekeeping (1938)....	Frank C. Pellett.....	2.50
Hive and the Honey Bee (1949).....	Roy A. Grout.....	4.00
Honey Bees and Their Management (1951)...	S. B. Whitehead and F. R. Shaw.....	3.50
Honey Getting (1948).....	E. L. Sechrist.....	1.00
Honey in the Comb (1951).....	Carl E. Killion.....	3.00
Honey and Your Health (1944).....	E. Beck, D. Smedley....	3.00
Honey Plants of North America (1926)....	J. J. Lovell.....	1.50
How to Grow Queens (1938).....	Walter T. Kelley.....	.50
How to Succeed with Bees (1930).....	Atkins and Hawkins....	.55
Langstroth on the Hive and Honey Bee (1927)....	C. P. Dadant.....	2.00
Life of the Bee (1904).....	M. Maeterlinck.....	3.00
Living from Bees (1946).....	Frank C. Pellett.....	2.50
Practical Queen Rearing (1945).....	Frank C. Pellett.....	1.00
Productive Beekeeping (1923).....	Frank C. Pellett.....	3.00
Queen Rearing (1946).....	L. E. Snelgrove.....	5.00
Queen Rearing (1950).....	J. Eckert and H. Laidlaw.....	2.50
Queen Rearing Simplified (1923).....	Jay Smith.....	1.25
Starting Right with Bees (1945).....	H. G. Rowe.....	.75
The Bee Hunter (1949).....	G. H. Edgell.....	2.50

BEE JOURNALS

The following are issued monthly at about \$1.50 to \$2.00 per year:

American Bee Journal, Hamilton, Ill.
Gleanings in Bee Culture, Medina, Ohio
Modern Beekeeping, Clarkson, Ky.

ORGANIZATIONS IN THE BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY

American Bee Breeders Association---Roy S. Weaver, Secretary,
Weaver Apiaries, Navasota, Texas.

American Beekeeping Federation---Glenn O. Jones, Secretary, Atlantic,
Iowa. A national organization of beekeepers comprised of State
and county beekeepers' organizations and individual beekeepers.
Annual dues \$5.00

American Honey Institute---Mrs. Harriett M. Grace, Director
Commercial State Bank Building, Madison, Wis. An organization
sponsored and supported by bee-supply companies, beekeepers'
organizations and individuals. Its purpose is to give publicity
to honey through demonstrations, lectures, radio talks, honey
recipes, and other literature.

Apiary Inspectors of America---F. L. Thomas, Secretary, Texas
Agricultural Experiment Station, College Station, Texas.

Bee Industries Association---Gordon G. Frater, Watertown, Wis.
Representing supply manufacturers.

Honey Bee Improvement Cooperative Association---Charles A. Reese,
Secretary, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. A nonprofit
organization to promote the distribution of improved strains of
the honey bee.

Southern States Beekeepers' Federation---David Dunavan, President,
Clemson, South Carolina. An organization of honey producers, shippers
of package bees, and queen breeders devoted to the interest of
beekeeping in the Southern States.

State Beekeepers' Organization---A beekeepers' association exists
in practically every State. Information about such associations
can usually be obtained through your State Department of Agriculture
or your Agricultural College or Experiment Station.

BEEKEEPING AND POLLINATION RESEARCH LABORATORIES, BUREAU OF ENTOMOLOGY
AND PLANT QUARANTINE, U. S. D. A.

Research work on beekeeping and insect pollination is centered in the Division of Bee Culture and Biological Control, Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, Md.

Arizona---Southwestern States Bee Culture Laboratory at Tucson.

Frank E. Todd, in charge. Cooperating with the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Arizona.

California---Pacific States Bee Culture Laboratory at Davis. Geo. H.

Vansell, in charge. Cooperating with the California Agricultural Experiment Station, the University of California and the Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station.

Louisiana---Southern States Bee Culture Laboratory, University Station

at Baton Rouge. Warren Whitcomb, Jr., in charge. Cooperating with the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station and the University of Louisiana.

Maryland---Headquarters, Division of Bee Culture and Biological Control,

Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, Md. Jas. I. Hambleton, in charge.

Utah---Legume Seed Research Laboratory, Logan. George E. Bohart is

in charge of the insect-pollination phases. Cooperating with the Utah Agricultural College and Utah Agricultural Experiment Station.

Wisconsin---North Central States Bee Culture Laboratory at Madison.

C. J. Farrar, in charge. Cooperating with the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station and the University of Wisconsin.

Wyoming---Intermountain States Bee Culture Laboratory at Laramie.

A. P. Sturtevant, in charge. Cooperating with the Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station and the University of Wyoming.

ADVICE TO BEGINNERS

Beekeeping is a specialized industry requiring fundamental knowledge of bee behavior and a genuine liking for handling bees. Locating colonies close to available sources of nectar is important, since to insure good crops the bees should be within flying range, that is within 1 or 2 miles, of an abundance of nectar-secreting plants. Good beekeeping locations are found in practically every State, so that the selection of apiary sites resolves itself into choosing locations where nectar-secreting plants occur in profusion and where living conditions are desirable.

With proper experience and a liking for bees, a person in a favorable location can obtain from beekeeping a return that compares favorably with that from most agricultural pursuits. Beekeeping, however, can easily become a profitless undertaking, and to avoid this we advise beginners not to invest heavily. Practical knowledge gained through a season's work with an experienced beekeeper should be invaluable to a beginner. If a person cannot spend time with a beekeeper, the next best thing is to acquire two or three colonies and do the best he can. A number of State educational institutions offer resident or correspondence courses in beekeeping.

A common method of starting a colony is to purchase a package of bees, preferably 3 pounds, with a queen and to install this package in a hive equipped with frames containing full sheets of brood foundation. Instructions for installing usually accompany the package.

If established colonies are purchased, they should be (1) in modern hives, (2) acquired from a reliable beekeeper, and (3) accompanied by a certificate of inspection to insure freedom from disease.

The best time to begin beekeeping with either package bees or established colonies is in the spring, when fruit trees are in bloom.

A beginner's outfit may consist of the following items, although it is suggested that catalogs from some of the bee supply houses be consulted for comparable information:

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|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 10-frame hive, consisting of: | 1 3-lb. package of bees with queen |
| 1 bottom board | 1 smoker |
| 2 10-frame hive bodies complete with frames and brood foundation | 1 bee veil |
| 2 to 4 shallow supers complete with frames and thin super foundation | 1 hive tool |
| 1 outer cover and 1 inner cover | 10-15 lb. of granulated sugar |
| | 4 oz. of No. 28-gage wire |
| | 1 spur imbedder |

Such outfits, including a subscription to a bee journal, cost approximately \$20. The equipment can be varied, and more can be added after a person has become experienced and learns how to manage large colonies. The standard 10-frame hive is the type generally used in the United States.

While factory-made equipment ordinarily gives the most satisfactory results, some beekeepers prefer to construct their own beehives. If this is done, it is a good plan to purchase or borrow a complete hive to use as a model. It is essential that all dimensions be carefully adhered to; otherwise the bees will build combs and add propolis where it is not desired. Likewise careful construction is necessary so that all hive parts are readily interchangeable.

The Italian bee is the kind recommended for the beginner in this country. It is hardy, industrious, and fairly gentle, and can be readily obtained in pure stock since it is the bee most commonly kept in the United States.

You should consult your Agricultural College, State Department of Agriculture, or Agricultural Experiment Station for information on State beekeeping publications, extension work in beekeeping, inspection service, good beekeeping locations, beekeeping associations, and the like.

CARDINAL POINTS TO BE OBSERVED IN KEEPING BEES

1. Bees need an abundant store of honey (25 or more pounds during the active season and 50 to 60 pounds during winter), pollen, plenty of room for brood rearing, a source of water, protection from the wind, and exposure to sunlight.

2. Swarming results in the loss of honey, and therefore should be controlled.

3. There should be empty comb space in the hives at all times preceding and during a honey flow. If every cell becomes occupied with brood, pollen, or honey, the bees will swarm or stop working, in either case causing a loss of honey if just before or during a flow.

4. For successful wintering a colony should have a young queen of high producing stock, a large cluster of young, fall-raised bees, 60 or more pounds of sealed honey, and several combs containing large areas of pollen. For these requirements a colony must have a 2-story standard hive with a gross weight, in October, of about 130 pounds.

5. It is unprofitable and, in many States, illegal to keep bees in box hives or "gums."

6. It does not pay to cultivate any plant for bees alone. Nectar resources may be improved, however, by planting such crops as sweet clover on waste lands.

7. Starvation is one of the principal causes of unprofitable beekeeping. If bees are short of honey stores, a syrup of two parts of clean granulated sugar to one of water should be fed. Plan carefully and avoid having to feed the bees by leaving them plenty of honey at all times.

8. Diseases of bees cause large annual losses of bees, honey, and equipment. Beekeepers should learn to recognize the symptoms, particularly of American foulbrood.

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DISEASES OF BEES

Although it is normal to find a few dead bees at the entrance of a hive, the presence of large numbers should cause the beekeeper to examine the colony for some abnormal condition. The presence of trembling or paralyzed bees, or of bees crawling and apparently unable to fly, should arouse suspicion. Two of the commonest abnormal conditions of adult bees are poisoning by insecticides and Nosema disease. A laboratory diagnosis can be made for Nosema disease and insecticide poisoning, although at times a diagnosis of any abnormal condition of adult bees may require actual observation of the colony affected.

In many parts of the country beekeepers suffer losses from American or European foulbrood, the two most serious brood diseases. European foulbrood can be controlled by proper corrective measures, but American foulbrood, the more serious and prevalent of the two, requires a more drastic treatment. The bees and combs of colonies infected with American foulbrood should be burned.

Apiary inspection is a function of the States, and is maintained by most State Departments of Agriculture, to which should be referred all questions concerning apiary inspection, diagnoses, and proper methods of control. As a service to beekeepers, however, the Division of Bee Culture and Biological Control examines, without cost, samples of brood and adult bees. Reports of these diagnoses are sent to the beekeepers and copies to the proper State apiary officials.

For diagnosing brood diseases, send a sample of comb about 4 by 4 inches containing the affected brood or brood remains. Avoid including any honey if possible. For diseases of adult worker bees, send from 100 to 200 (preferably the latter) sick or dead bees. Mail all samples in a wooden or heavy cardboard box. Do not use tin, glass, or waxed paper. Address all samples to the Division of Bee Culture and Biological Control, Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, Md.